June 25, 1945

MEMORANDUM for
The President

SUBJECT: A brief report of the accomplishments of the Department of Health and Public Welfare.

Immediately upon my assumption of duties as Secretary of Health and Public Welfare and having in mind that the health of the people is one of the most important concerns of our Government, I appointed a committee with instructions to proceed at once with the reorganization of the Bureau of Health, so as to enable it to meet the needs of the present emergency and to rehabilitate as soon as possible the health services in the liberated areas. The appointment of personnel to key positions in the service was made immediately and soon thereafter, that of the field personnel was likewise made. The Bureau of Health was given instructions to cooperate closely with the various Army units to prevent as much as possible outbreak of communicable diseases. Health surveys in various liberated provinces were made by me personally, by the Acting In-Charge of the Bureau, and by its field personnel, and it is worthy to note that in all these inspection trips, no major outbreak of communicable diseases was found. Diseases in sporadic form, which may endanger the health and safety of the community, have been placed under control. In other words, the health conditions in the provinces visited have been found satisfactory.

The Bureau of Health was also instructed to organize immediately vaccinating units, so that vaccination and immunization work could be completed as early as possible before the rainy season set in. In view of the limited supply of vaccines, vaccinators were enjoined to take the utmost care in performing immunization work.

Routine but enlarged activities on malaria and tuberculosis are continued uninterruptedly at the San Lazaro Hospital. Malaria in the provinces of Pampanga and Pangasinan were looked into in coordination with the work of Army authorities, including a mosquito survey made in Bamban, Tarlac, where larvae of anopheles other than the local transmitters were met with. Assignments of health officers and subordinate employees to provinces and cities which are not yet provided with the service continue to be made as far as conditions and necessity warrant.

This Office and the bureaus and offices under it, have cooperated wholeheartedly with the Department of Health of the United States Army which is in charge of sanitation work in the City of Manila, to such an extent that part of our personnel was detailed to the said Department in its various activities. However, certain difficulties have been met with regard to the sanitation of the City of Manila and its environs, especially in the proper handling and disposal of garbage. Sufficient number of laborers could not be secured for the collection of garbage as quickly as was necessary and the people themselves have not observed the proper rules with regard to the disposal of wastes and refuse, notwithstanding the fact that the United States Army has made available on the

streets empty drums as garbage receptacles. Efforts to clean the streets of Manila as well as to educate the people in the use of simple incinerators by boring holes in the lower third section of empty drums, so as to create a draft, where they can burn their garbage daily, instead of dumping them around for flies and other vermin to breed in, have been made.

As an emergency measure, this Department has taken upon itself to place under it temporarily up to June 30, 1945 the laboratories of the Institute of Hygiene in Alabang, Rizal, in order to put it in a condition for the production of biological products badly needed in the prevention and control of disease. I am happy to report that the production of the Institute has now partially been rehabilitated, thus enabling its laboratories to manufacture up to date no less than 142,900 c.c. of cholera-typhoid-dysentery vaccine; 48,000 c.c. of cholera vaccine; and 195,000 units of dried vaccine virus, which have been reported already delivered to the requisitioning health agencies. Other vaccines are in the process of preparation. The rehabilitation of the serum production work of the Institute is also under way, and it will not be long before some essential antitoxic sera in ampules or in vials would be furnished to the public.

With the limited funds at its disposal, the Bureau of Public Welfare has also been reorganized to enable it to extend relief to the needy and to provide care, training, and education to orphaned, neglected, and other dependent classes of children, including minor delinquents and mentally defective children, as well as the aged and infirm. It has

already taken complete control and administration of the Welfareville Institutions and the Refugee Camp established therein since the middle of May of this year by transfer from PCAU #1. As of June 15, 1945, there were taken care of in Welfareville 365 orphans, 132 non-leprous children of leprous parents, 155 delinquent boys, 41 delinquent girls, 44 aged and infirm, 18 mentally defective children, and 1,063 refugees.

It has also cooperated fully with the Police Department and the courts of justice in the City of Manila in the psychological and the social investigation and treatment of delinquent minors. A total of 254 cases of minor delinquents was referred to the Bureau for social investigation during the period from April 1 to June 15, 1945, of whom 192 were recommended for probation, 14 were recommended for commitment to the Philippine Training Schools for Boys and Girls, and the rest of the cases were disposed in some other way.

The Bureau, in cooperation with the other departments of the Government, as well as the Civil Affairs Section of the AFPAC, was able to ship on June 2, 1945, approximately 250 refugees from the various refugee homes in Greater Manila to the Visayas.

It has likewise been entrusted with the distribution of used and new clothing received from the Philippine War Relief (of the United States) Inc. In the City of Manila alone, there have been registered 6,318 applicants, who are heads of families, for these clothing relief. The distribution commenced on June 25 and will end on July 20, 1945. From three to four bales of clothing, having an average of 350 pieces each,

were sent to La Union, Misamis Occidental, Rizal, Iloilo City and Davao City.

The Drug Inspection Service of this Department has also been reconstituted, considering the fact that since the liberation of the City of Manila, a great number of drug stores have been operating without the necessary permit to do so, and the peddling of drugs and medicines, which is prohibited by law, has been found to be rampant in the streets. As of June 15, 1945, this Department has already issued 339 permits to drug stores, 28 to Chinese drug stores, 24 to pharmaceutical laboratories, 1 to chemical-pharmaceutical laboratory, 1 to drug department (importer and wholesaler), and 6 to toilet article laboratories. With the aid of two policemen from the City of Manila detailed to the Drug Inspection Service of this Department, the campaign to stop peddling, as well as the sale of spurious drugs and medicines, in the City has yielded positive results. Due to the lack of personnel and transportation facilities, the activities of the Office have not been extended to the provinces, with the exception of the nearby towns where a few drug store owners have applied for the reopening of their establishments.

On June 8, 1945, the five Boards of Examiners; namely, the Board of Medical Examiners, the Board of Pharmaceutical Examiners and Inspectors, the Board of Dental Examiners, the Board of Examiners for Nurses, and the Board of Optical Examiners were reconstituted by reappointing the 1941 members to serve the unexpired portion of their terms. Immediately after the members of the Boards had taken their oath of office, they

were requested to look into the delicate question as to whether or not examinations given by their respective boards during the Japanese Regime should be considered valid.

This Department desires to make of record its deep appreciation and gratitude to the United States Army for the valuable help and cooperation both in service and in material aid, received from its various units which, to a great extent, made possible whatever progress thus far accomplished in health and welfare work. Likewise, similar acknowledgment is due the officials of the various Departments of the Commonwealth Government whose efforts in many ways enabled the bureaus and offices under this Department to carry on their work as effectively as could be expected under difficult conditions.

Respectfully submitted,

BASILIO J. VALDES
Secretary of Health and Public Welfare